fast and the electric engines can not move on that;

(b) whether the committee had also recommended other disqualities of the said sleeper including limitation of its life up to 15 years; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons that the Railway Board had ordered to purchase fifteen lakh of such sleepers despite the recommendation of the Safety Standard Committee on a much higher price?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) No Committee by the name Safety Standard Committee of Railways, 1991 was constituted. However, a Committee of three Directors of Railway Board was constituted on 19.12.88 to put up a detailed document and action plan regarding use of PRC sleepers vis-a-vis CST-9 sleepers. The Committee recommended that concrete sleepers should be used on A & B routes where the speed will be 130 Kms. per hour and above and having traffic density of more than 10 GMT and carrying heavy axle loads. For all other routes where the speed is going to be less than 130 Kms. per hour, CST-9 sleepers should be used as they are more economical.

(b) The Committee stated that the life expetancy of CST-9 sleepers is 22.5 years. No other disqualities were mentioned by the Committee.

(c) Based upon the requirement of Zonal Railways, orders for purchase of 1,40,000 tonnes of CST-9 sleepers over a period of more than two years have been placed on various manufacturers. These sleepers will be used on sections where the speed is going to be less than 130 Kms. per hour, or for casual renewals to maintain the tracks in safe condition.

...Proposal to privatise city booking.. agencies

2236. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal under its consideration to privatise city booking agencies;

(b) if so, whether such a step will create blackmarketing of railway tickets;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to review its functioning on booking to minimise the rush; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (c) City Booking Agenices are already privatised and are run on Contract. Generally these agencies predominantly deal with unreserved tickets where there is practically no scope for black marketing. Watch is kept on the City Booking Agencies for their proper functioning as per the terms of the contract.

(d) Based on requirements, additional booking windows are opened and the working hours of the existing windows are extended to reduce the rush.

(e) Does not arise .

Non-implementation of the Report of the Railway Fare and Freight Committee

2237. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: SHRI SATISH AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be please to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Report of the Railway Fare and Freight Committee which was submitted to Government in December last is still lying in cold storage as reported